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Before the Labor Committee

In Support of SB 1178: AN ACT EXPANDING CONNECTICUT PAID SICK DAYS

Good Evening Senator Kushner, Representative Sanchez, and members of the Committee, my name is Brenda Glazier and I'm a PCA from Simsbury. I'm here to ask you to pass Senate Bill 1178 so that we as PCAs do not have to live in poverty or miss pay when we are sick. I love the work I do because I make a positive difference in my consumer's life. The consumer I care for has a traumatic brain injury and has lived with me since 2016. I'm essentially a round-the-clock caregiver.

I've been without health insurance throughout the bulk of the pandemic. I've looked into private insurance but it would cost me \$600-\$700 per month. If I purchased that insurance I'd be living in a tent. I don't qualify for food stamps or any other state assistance because I get paid 40 hours per week, which puts me technically over the poverty level but still working poor, uninsured, and without any safety net. And even then, we are not included in the state's sick leave laws, which means not only can I not get sick because I can't afford the doctor when I am sick, but I also can't take time off to care for myself when I do get sick because it means I will miss a day or more of pay and I cannot afford that.

I got COVID in 2021, and the anxiety of worrying about what would happen if I would have needed emergency medical care was overwhelming. When I was having severe leg pain with COVID, I worried that it might be another blood clot which I've experienced in the past. I knew I would have to call 911 if anything happened to me, because that would be my only option to get care without getting denied. I had to go through COVID with no sick days or paid time off. When we won our new Union contract last spring, I was so proud and pleased that we won our first-ever paid time off benefit. We were promised 5 days per year for full-time workers. BUT almost a year later, the State of CT still has not implemented a system for us to use this benefit.

Please do what is right by me and my consumer and support SB 1178 to expand Paid Sick Day laws to include PCAs. Thank you for your time.